A

LETTER

FROM A

CAPTAIN

OF

A MAN OF WAR,

TO A

MEMBER of PARLIAMENT.

LONDON:

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THIS letter was written at the concluſion of the laſt war, and for reaſons of little conſequence for the public to be made acquainted with, laid aſide, and *now* publiſhed.

——— *perierunt Tempora longi Servitii.*

JUVENAL.

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SIR,

I Return you my thanks for your early intimation of the notice, which his Majeſty has condeſcended, at the opening of the ſeſſion, to take of the brave officers, who have ſerv'd him and their country, in the courſe of this glorious war; and I rejoice to hear from you, that both houſes of parliament have unanimouſly approv'd of that part of the ſpeech from the throne, and promis'd to carry his Majeſty's gracious intentions to effect.

It has been ſaid upon the occaſion, I hope with no ill will to us, that parliament ſometimes returns the words of the ſpeech, without particularly reſuming the conſideration of every part of it, in the courſe of the ſeſſion. I am not ſo diffident, either of their attention to the honor and utility of government, or of our pretenſions to public regard, as to apprehend that any ſuch inattention, if it ever did happen, will happen in our caſe.

But favorable as I am perſuaded the regards of parliament are towards us, and equitable as our claims upon the public are, we hope to be pardoned, if we wiſh our caſe to be taken into conſideration, while the memory of our ſervices is recent; if we betray a little impatience for the day, and if we are active, and perhaps more aſſiduous than we need to be, in ſetting forth the circumſtances of our caſe, and the equity of our claim to ſomething more from our country, than the preſent allowance to captains out of employment.

I ſhould be happy in ſeeing ſo good a cauſe in your hands; but have heard you expreſs ſo much delicacy with reſpect to government, and ſuch high notions of the decorum, to be obſerved in that auguſt aſſembly, that I can neither hope, nor wiſh you to undertake an affair of this kind ſingly, knowing that the merits of a good cauſe do frequently ſuffer, from an improper mode of ſupporting them. However, you have it in your power, without any breach of decency, and without hazard to your own character, to ſerve us in a manner, in which we cannot ſerve ourſelves; and having the power, I ſhould do you injuſtice to doubt your inclination. You have many opportunities, both within doors and without, of preſſing our caſe, upon thoſe who can beſt patroniſe it, and whenever it becomes

matter

matter of debate, you will have motives both of public ſpirit and private friendſhip, to exert your eloquence in our behalf.

In hopes that ſuch a day is not very far diſtant, I beg you to give me the hearing, whilſt I ſuggeſt to you the principal circumſtances, ſome of which might eſcape your notice, in conſidering a ſubject, of which almoſt every circumſtance will, I apprehend, have the force of an argument. If I ſhould have the misfortune to be tedious, you will make ſome allowance for the eagerneſs with which men plead their own cauſe, and will excuſe any thing redundant in a friend, who is above advancing any thing falſe or fallacious.

In order to form a juſt eſtimate of the condition of the commanding officers in his Majeſty's navy, with a view to aſcertain their ſubſiſtence, either in time of war or peace, upon an equitable footing, every thing ſhould be taken into conſideration, which diſtinguiſhes them from other ranks of men; the nature and importance of their duty; the rigour with which it is juſtly enforced; the hazard to which they are expoſed; the rank they take with the officers of the army; the expences to which they are neceſſarily obliged; the expences which they incidentally, and in moſt caſes unavoidably incur; their incapacity for any other profeſſion; and the compenſation allotted to them on all theſe accounts, in times of war and in times of peace, and that compenſation ſhould be compared with the preſent value of money, as well as with the pay of gentlemen in their rank in the army; and I am ſorry to add, with the better pay of gentlemen, inferior to them in rank, in the marine ſervice.

I ſhall not be minute on all theſe heads, as ſome of

of them muſt be fully known to you, and as I cannot pretend to urge them ſo well as you.

Indeed no ſubject of Great Britain needs to be informed, at the cloſe of the preſent war, of the importance of the naval ſervice to the trade, to the honor, and to the independency of the Britiſh Nation. I am far from intending an invidious compariſon with the army, in aſſerting this importance of the navy. The gentlemen of the army deſerve the thanks, which *they* as well as *we* have had the honor to receive. But they will not deny, that the naval ſtrength of an iſland is its main ſtrength, and that a crown poſſeſs'd of dominions ſo diſtant, that without our aid, they would be inacceſſible by armies, and dominions ſo circumſtanced, that in many caſes, the operations of armies would, without our aid, prove ineffectual, muſt derive great part of its ſecurity, from the diligence and bravery of the officers of the navy; not to mention that the ſovereignty of the ſea, is the moſt precious jewel in his Majeſty's crown, and that perhaps half a million of the ſubjects of this realm are employed on the ocean, and depend on the navy for protection. All this I may fairly take for granted.

The nature of our ſervice requires, not only that we be well qualified for every part of our duty, but that we be more particularly diligent and circumſpect at certain times, than men of any other profeſſion in life.

Hence the wiſdom of government has inforced our duty with a ſeverity, to which we ſubmit, as ſuppoſing it abſolutely neceſſary, but which, without that ſuppoſition, might appear hard and diſcouraging.

The

The articles of war, in the army, are perhaps as rigorous as ours, but with this difference, that offences in the army may be more preciſely determined, and a ſentence more unexceptionably formed, than in trials for offences in the navy; and a neglect, which to perſons unacquainted with the ſervice, would appear inconſiderable, may be of ſuch conſequence, as to render it neceſſary to ſuperſede us, or deprive us of our pay.

I ſhall trouble you with only one inſtance to illuſtrate this. By a late wiſe regulation of the Lords Commiſſioners of the Admiralty, we are threatned with the loſs of our pay, if we neglect to make maritime and other obſervations wherever we come; and to report them to their lordſhips. It would be undutiful and unworthy of us, to complain of a regulation of ſo much utility to the public; but we hope to be indulged, in pleading this as peculiar to our ſervice, and though we *ought* not to call it a burthen to do the duty, we beg leave to ſtate the hazard of looſing our pay for the neglect of it, as one hazard more, than men in any other profeſſion are expoſed to.

But the nature of our ſervice expoſes us to ſo many hazards peculiar to us, that I ſhould be a bad advocate for our cauſe, if I inſiſted much upon any one of them. Our whole ſervice is a continued courſe of danger. I hope you will not ſuſpect me of complaining of the dangers, to which we are expoſed in engaging the enemy. We derive ſo much credit from behaving properly on ſuch an occaſion, and feel ſo much ſatisfaction in it, that events of that ſort are the moſt deſirable in our profeſſion. You muſt have obſerved, in the courſe of this war, that we have ſought and chaced the enemy, and very ſeldom met him caſually. The

natural

natural enthuſiaſm of brave minds, in fighting the cauſe of our country, has been heightned by an emulation among us, which, I hope an officer may ſay, without breach of modeſty or truth, has made the Britiſh navy more formidable than it ever was, in any period of our hiſtory.

But our zeal for our duty and honor cannot be ſuppoſed to exempt us from caſualties, which no human courage can reſiſt. The various calamities through which we paſs, will try and endanger the beſt conſtitution of body, and in engaging with the weather, our fortitude is neceſſary indeed, but both that and the utmoſt ſkill, to which by long experience we can arrive, will be ſometimes baffled. Moſt of theſe unfortunate accidents are peculiar to *our* ſervice, and attended with this aggravating inconvenience, that we are detach'd from the reſt of the world, whilſt we are encountring irreſiſtible calamities, and excluded by our duty from all the alleviations, which might be drawn from the pleaſures and comforts of ſocial and domeſtic life, which all other profeſſions are permitted, in a greater or leſs degree, to enjoy.

If theſe hazards to our health and lives were attended with a compenſation, which approached towards an equivalent, it might be ſome comfort to us that we are *gentlemen*, and that we fill a ſtation, which is highly reputable, and ſecures to us reſpect, in foreign nations, as well as at home. But if the reward we receive, by our eſtabliſhment, be neither adequate to the nature, and circumſtances of our duty, nor proportioned to our rank in life, it then becomes a misfortune to us, that we are not only gentlemen, but gentlemen, if I may be allowed to ſay it without vanity, of a conſiderable rank.

By

By the regulation of our rank in the late reign, a Captain commanding a ſhip of twenty guns or upwards, is to rank as a Lieutenant Colonel, after having been in that command three years, he takes rank as Colonel. It was his late Majeſty's wiſdom, or at leaſt the wiſdom of thoſe who adviſed him, to make a ſervice of ſuch conſequence to the nation as reſpectable as poſſible. It was an invitation to perſons of any rank into the ſervice, by giving them as a pledge, an honourable character to maintain. But diſintereſted as we are known to be; we could not forbear obſerving, that we had an acceſſion of figure, without an acceſſion of pay. Our rank which might before be diſputable, was now confirmed, and ſome of the expences, ariſing from ſuperior rank, which might before have been evaded, were now become more neceſſary, as the rank was more generally known. It is with great reluctance that I enter upon the article of our expences. Pleas of that ſort are ſo commonly made by ſordid men, that the moſt unavoidable plea of the kind, can hardly eſcape the imputation of a littleneſs of mind, which the world will admit to be very unnatural in us. Our neceſſary expences are greater than thoſe of any perſon, in any other profeſſion whoſe ſubſiſtence is equal to ours. The publick allowance for our table is not greater than that of the loweſt mariner, yet we are obliged by our ſtation to keep a table, and perhaps inclined by our birth or education, or by a zeal for the honor of our Royal Maſter, to keep a better table, than our pay will ſupport. The proviſions cannot well be purchas'd by us in perſon, and as our attention to our duty, and our natural inattention to little matters, expoſe us to frauds from the perſons with whom we deal, ſo the ſame reaſons expoſe us to ſome injuſtice from the perſons, who tranſact thoſe matters

between us and them. With the beſt œconomy, we cannot forbear ſome friendly intercourſe with the officers ſubordinate to us, which intercourſe cannot be carried on at any expence but ours. In receiving ſtrangers, eſpecially in foreign ports, we are bound to conſult the honor of the King, and the dignity of his Navy. If we ſhould indulge a national pride upon the occaſion, the nation will pardon us, though it cannot be expected that our creditors will have the public ſpirit, to be the leſs importunate in their demands. In our dreſs, we are by a late regulation, obliged to do honor to our corps, in wearing an uniform, very elegant, and well ſuited to our rank, but at the ſame time very expenſive, and ill ſuited to our pay. Theſe may be conſider'd as our conſtant NECESSARY expences. We have, beſides theſe, many incidental expences which are as unavoidable as the neceſſary ones, tho' their return is not ſo regular and conſtant.

The gentlemen of the Army have an allowance for contingent money; we of the Navy have only CONTINGENT EXPENCES. There is hardly a nation in the world unacquainted with the generoſity of the Britiſh nation. Whatever port we arrive at, the expectations from us, are greater than we can anſwer, with the utmoſt ſtretch of our ability; and a manner of living, which would have the appearance of extravagance in other men, and is really extravagance in us, ſeems to be no more, than what perſons employed in a public and honorable ſervice, owe to the public. If we have the honor of conveying a public miniſter or a general, or any perſon employ'd by the crown, to his deſtination, we conceive it to be our duty to accommodate them in every reſpect, and we ſhould very much forget our rank and character, if

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we accepted from them any pecuniary reward, however expenſive our unavoidable courteſy may prove.

I am ſorry and aſhamed to mention theſe things which are not commonly obſerv'd, unleſs we chance to be deficient in any article of decent expence. The many little articles which compoſe a reputable character, are apt to be overlook'd, till ſome defects is found, perhaps in a matter of expence, which a man whoſe ſpirit was not cramped by his condition would have fully diſcharged, to the ſatisfaction of the world. But the world is unmerciful in forming an eſtimate of a whole character from a ſingle incidential, and perhaps unavoidable omiſſion; and the world is not very conſiderate in comparing the expences neceſſary to ſupport a reputable character, with the only viſible means of ſupplying thoſe expences.

When we return home, and the nation is by our faithful diſcharge of our duty, bleſt with a peace, and eaſed of the burthens of war, we are the ſufferers by a general happineſs of *our* procuring. That which is call'd our half pay, is our whole ſubſiſtence. We are unfit for any profeſſion which might improve that ſubſiſtence, and give us the appearance of gentlemen, whilſt we have ſo uncontroverted a right to the name.

We are placed above every the moſt reputable kind of traffick, and the learned profeſſions, being pretty well manned, wou'd ſhut the door againſt us, if we were diſpos'd, or qualified to enter. To one profeſſion, and indeed ſome of the ſubaltern officers of the Army have recourſe, and are admitted; but there wou'd be ſo much impropriety in us to take refuge there, that if we had time

to apply to the ſtudy of letters, and were in other reſpects qualified, for the care of a pariſh, yet greater encouragement than we might expect, wou'd hardly induce perſons ſo far advanced in our own profeſſion, to begin the world in another, to which we have not been educated.

So that our whole dependance muſt be upon the daily bread allotted to us by the name of half pay, unleſs we have had it in our power to make ſome proviſion for ourſelves by frugality in the courſe of the war.—From what has been alledged above, we ſhall hardly be ſuſpected of any hoard from our pay; and from the hiſtory of this war very few of us will appear to have enrich'd ourſelves by captures. Probably an objection on this head may have been in your mind whilſt I have been venting my complaints. It is doubtleſs a great advantage to have the chance of prizes, but it is a more ſolid one actually to take them, and this happens to as few in proportion, in our lottery as in any other. It might be proved in many caſes, to have been our own fault, or rather our merit, that we have not ſucceeded better in that way.—We have been ſlander'd by men, who being either unqualified, or not benevolent enough to make the proper enquiries, to content themſelves with a general charge, without attending to the facts, by which it ſhou'd be ſupported to make it general. It is not the character of a brave officer, who has his duty at heart to neglect the more eſſential ſervice of his country, in order to purſue ſome valuable prize; moſt of thoſe which have been taken, have been taken caſually. Our language is, that we fell in with them. We are known to have had our eyes, upon ſhips of war, and privateers, rather than the more profitable capture of merchants ſhips richly laden. So that this, the moſt

valuable

valuable advantage we can obtain, cannot be fairly placed to our account, on the ſubject in queſtion; becauſe, our honor is concerned in attending to other more national advantages; and were we forgetful of our honor, yet the chances are not ſo frequent as to be fairly eſtimated as part of our pay. The benefit we receive from taking privateers, and thus moſt eſſentially ſerving the trade of Great Britain, is very ſmall, after the many deductions which our agents are much better qualified to contrive than we to diſpute: and it may with probability be affirmed, that not a captain in the Navy, has derived from his ſucceſs in that way, any reſource for his wants in time of peace. The conſideration therefore of captures has very little weight againſt the plea of the inſufficiency of our preſent reward, compared with our duty, and our faithful diſcharge of it.

I proceed to the conſideration of that reward.—I am not ſo well furniſh'd with books, as to trace back the pay of the officers of the Navy to their original eſtabliſhment. Perhaps, if I cou'd, I might diſcover ſome very ancient arguments in our favor, as it appears from all I can learn, that we were better paid fourſcore years ago, than we are at preſent.

The firſt regular eſtabliſhment upon the plan of the preſent, appears to have been made in the year 1672; but I have not learned what was then the pay. Probably it was not leſs, than that which was afterwards ſettled, as the king's brother thought the ſervice ſo honorable, that he accepted the command of it. Our glorious deliverer King William, ſenſible of the importance of the marine to theſe kingdoms, paid a particular attention to us, and ſettled our pay by an order

of

of council of the twenty-ſecond of February 1693—4, when the half pay ſeems to have been firſt eſtabliſhed. It was natural upon the firſt inſtitution of it, to make the half pay, literally one half of the whole pay; and accordingly, it was *a moiety of the pay, which the officers had at ſea*; and the two eſtabliſhments were call'd by the name of *double pay at ſea*, and *half pay on ſhore*. As the double pay was then near one third more than it is at preſent, the half pay was proportionably more than it is at preſent; and both were thus ſettled at a time, when every thing neceſſary for life, and every ſuperfluity were more than one third leſs in value, than they are at preſent. I hope I do not miſrepreſent or ſtrain the truth. I am not qualified to make an exact calculation of the relative proportion of the prices of things at different times; but I have been told that the rents of lands, in moſt parts of the kingdom are almoſt doubled, and that the intereſt of money is reduced in an equal proportion, ſince that period; and if I remember right, I have heard you affirm, that the value of money is commonly eſtimated from thoſe two ſtandards. However, King William having in the year 1700, order'd the board of Admiralty to prepare a new draught of an eſtabliſhment of pay to officers ſerving at ſea, and of an allowance to officers out of employment on ſhore, they prepared one, agreeably to his Majeſty's intentions, and after ſtating the ſeveral proportions of whole pay, their firſt obſervation is that, "his Majeſty will thereby "perceive, that near a third part of the pre-"ſent double pay, to thoſe officers will be re-"trenched."

The public exigencies at that time might render ſuch a retrenchment wiſe, and perhaps neceſſary; and

and as it left the ſea officers in poſſeſſion of the pay they at preſent receive, or rather in poſſeſſion of at leaſt one third more than they receive at preſent, if we conſider and compare the times, they probably ſubmitted to it, as they ought, without much diſcontent, or perhaps the number of ſervants allow'd to them, might then be a new eſtabliſhment, and intended to ſupply the deduction made from their pay.—But the half pay ſeems at that time, to have been laid aſide with reſpect to officers in general, and ſomething elſe was ſubſtituted in the room of it, upon the frugal plan, by the name of *an allowance to officers out of employment on ſhore*. This allowance was given only to a certain number, but it was prefaced with a reaſon, which probably afterwards procured for the reſt, the proviſion they now have. The reaſon may be worth repeating, as it ſuperadded to the motives of juſtice in our favor, motives of policy and public utility. We read in the report made by the lords of the Admiralty to his Majeſty in council, in April 1700, that "it "will be much for his Majeſty's ſervice, and for "the ſafety of the kingdom, to have always a "competent number of experienced ſea officers, "ſupported on ſhore who may be within reach "to anſwer any ſudden or emergent occaſion." After this judicious reaſon for ſuch an eſtabliſhment, they propoſe the number of Admirals, Captains, &c. and their ſeveral allowances. The number of Captains was fifty, of whom twenty were to have ten ſhillings per day, and the remaining thirty were to have eight ſhillings a day. By this means, their Lordſhip's intimated to the King, that more than one half of the ſum allowed before for half pay, would be ſaved to the public. It is doubtleſs meritorious in thoſe who are intruſted by the crown, to provide for the public ſervice with frugality; and

probably

Probably the King's affairs might then require ſuch a defalcation from that branch of the public expence. But when I conſider from whom one half of this money was ſaved, and the great purpoſes for which the other half was appropriated, I cannot read that order of council without lamenting that ſo neceſſary a meaſure of frugality cou'd not be taken without the hazard of great detriment and diſgrace to the nation. However, one obſervation which I ſhall make upon it compenſates for the apparent ignominy of turning adrift ſo many brave and confeſſedly uſeful men. It ſeems, by the allowance made to the Captains, that eight ſhillings a day appeared to their Lordſhip's at that time, in the year 1700, the loweſt allowance that cou'd be given to ſecure the ſervice of officers of their rank, *for any ſudden or emergent occaſion.* I ſhall probably not be much miſtaken, in eſtimating eight ſhillings in the year 1700 to be equivalent, all things conſider'd to twelve ſhillings now. So that a ſum now equivalent to twelve ſhillings per day, appear'd to the board of Admiralty to be the loweſt that ought to be given to a Captain *out of employment on ſhore.*

And what is the preſent half pay of Captains in the Navy? The fifty ſeniors have the allowance abovemention'd of ten ſhillings to twenty, and eight ſhillings to thirty of them per day: the next forty have ſix ſhillings; the fifty next to them have five ſhillings, and all the reſt have no more than four ſhillings per day. Perhaps two thirds of the Captains in his Majeſty's Navy, many of whom rank as Colonels in the Army, the reſt as Lieutenants Colonel, are reduced, at the concluſion of this glorious war, to ſubſiſt upon *four ſhillings a day!*—The whole pay of a colonel of foot is, if I miſtake not, one pound five ſhillings

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per day, beſides his ſubſiſtence money; and the whole pay of a Lieutenant Colonel is ſeventeen ſhillings a day, beſide his ſubſiſtence money. The half pay of each is one moiety of their full pay. I know not how to account for this inequality between the two ſervices, otherwiſe, than that our relative rank was not ſettled by authority at the time, when our reſpective pay was ſettled, and the wars of King William and Queen Anne, were ſo very continental, that the Navy had not ſo great a ſhare of the glory, nor perhaps contributed ſo much to bring the enemy to reaſon, as we are known to have done in this war. But whatever was the reaſon of a diſparity, ſo manifeſtly injurious to us, it will be probably ſome time removed, and we hope, that the preſent will not be thought an improper time, when our ſervices are univerſally confeſſed; when all parties of men unite, in acknowledging the bravery and fidelity of his Majeſty's officers, by ſea and land.

We ſhould be ſorry, if this plea of ours, and the ſucceſs we hope for, ſhould excite any jealouſy in the officers, who have ſerv'd with equal bravery in the land ſervice. We wiſh to preſerve the ſame union with them in peace, which has done ſo much honor to both, and proved ſo beneficial to his Majeſty's ſervice, in the courſe of the war. We only deſire to be raiſed to the ſame level with them in our pay, upon which we are placed, by the higheſt authority in our rank. The equity of this will be yet more ſtriking, if it be conſider'd that the officers in the marine ſervice, who act in ſubordination to us, enjoy the ſame pay and the ſame half pay with officers of their rank in the army. So that a captain of marines, who is under the command of a captain in the navy, on board of whoſe ſhip he and his company ſerve, enjoys at

this time five ſhillings a day half pay, whilſt an officer, ſo much his ſuperior, has no more than four ſhillings, unleſs he be within the ſeniority above-mentioned.—There is a public juſtice, which is full as obvious, as any caſe of juſtice or equity in private life; and it would be difficult to find an inſtance of a claim to public regard, much ſtronger, than that of perſons, moſt of whom are well born, ſome nobly born, who enter'd early, perhaps from a thirſt after glory, into a ſervice, which, without the utmoſt frugality, will not ſupport them, which at the ſame time is the ſupport of our national grandeur and proſperity; and who, after having done their utmoſt to defeat and ſubdue the public enemy, in all parts of the world, and after having ſucceeded to the ſatisfaction of the whole kingdom, are reduced at laſt to a public proviſion, ſo ſcanty, that they muſt become dependent upon the honeſt country gentleman, who ſhall commiſerate their caſe, and invite them to his table.—It is true, there is an objection, which might in point of rigor be made to the whole of my plea; but which I hope will not be made, as it ſo much reſembles the language of men, who triumph in having drawn others into a diſadvantageous bargain. The objection I mean, is, that we knew what was to be expected from the ſervice, before we engaged in it, and if we find it leſs beneficial than other profeſſions, we may blame ourſelves, for not having enter'd into them. I hope none of our countrymen will ungenerouſly reproach us for a conduct, which, ſo far as it was our choice, reſulted from that vivacity, that reſtleſsneſs of young men of ſpirit, which has been the means of raiſing the Britiſh nation to its preſent pitch of greatneſs, and making the Britiſh name honorable among the vaineſt people, and the loudeſt pretenders to honor in the world. If we have been imprudent in the

choice

choice of our profeſſion, let it not be proclaimed that the navy is a ſervice, not eligible in point of prudence; and if we have not been parſimonious, let it be remember'd, that we have attended to what is of more conſequence infinitely to our country, than the little ſavings we might have made; we have attended to our duty, and as far as lay in us, we have *ſaved* the nation. Surely it will not be contended, that a ſubſiſtence, leſs than the pay of an enſign in the army, is a comfortable proviſion for the retirement of an officer of the rank, experience, and public merit of a captain in his Majeſty's navy! I hope I do not ſpeak preſumptuouſly, for I hardly know a character among my brethren, to which my words are not applicable. The legiſlature ſuppoſes us entitled to ſome proviſion, or they would not have granted that which we have. As it was partly meant to reward us, and partly to ſecure our ſervice for future exigences, it was moſt probably their intention, that we ſhould have a comfortable proviſion; and I ſubmit it to them, how many comforts, men of family, education, years, rank, character and general acquaintance, can *extract* from four ſhillings a day? We muſt retire to ſome obſcure part of the kingdom, where the neceſſaries of life are to be purchaſed with our half pay, and there abſtain from the pleaſures of life, and feed our minds, with the recollection of our paſt ſervices, whilſt every perſon about us, is gay and proſperous, in conſequence of the ſervices we have perform'd for our king and country, which intitled us to FOUR SHILLINGS A DAY!

Pardon me for dwelling ſo much upon a ſubject, which makes a deeper impreſſion on my imagination, than perhaps it ought. I know, that many things are to be ſaid for contentment, in

any ſtate of life, and hope I ſhall be able to form my mind for a virtue, of which I ſhall ſtand ſo much in need. But it is difficult for men, who have a right to a certain generous degree of pride, to undergo the ridicule of poverty. It is difficult for moſt men, to qualify themſelves for an inactive life, whilſt in their vigor, and after having been fully engaged in an active ſphere. It is commonly an hard taſk, to fill up the vacuities in ſuch a mind. But how much harder is it to do this, when the loſs of employment is attended with a ſcanty ſubſiſtence, with little cares, which contract the mind, and render it by degrees unfit for any thing great, or enterpriſing, or laudable.—How far the public is in condition to anſwer his Majeſty's gracious deſire and intention, it is impoſſible for me to know, I can only ſay, that if juſtice and true policy are ſovereign motives to any public expence, *we are in no danger of being neglected.* The war has encreaſed the public debt, but not quite exhauſted the public credit of the kingdom; and if ſome of his Majeſty's ſubjects muſt ſuffer by the paſt expences, it ſeems rather unnatural, that inconveniences, on that account, ſhould fall to our lot, who have ſtood the brunt of the war, who have been the chief inſtruments to bring it to an iſſue, and whoſe ſervice the nation will need, and be entitled to, in caſe of any freſh rupture.

But, leſt reaſons of public œconomy ſhould be alledged againſt us, I have confined my plea, chiefly to the *captains* in the navy, though ſome parts of it are applicable to officers inferior to them. I meant no injury to thoſe officers, for I care not how many are benefitted by my argument. I wiſh them ſucceſs on any claims they may have upon the public. But, the rank of the captains, the reſponſibility of their command, the impoſſi-

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bility of their engaging in any ſervice of an inferior nature, and the preſumption that the legiſlature might be in a condition to attend to *our* caſe, though not in a condition to extend its regards proportionably to the whole ſervice, induced me to plead the cauſe of thoſe of my own rank; and I hope I am not too preſuming, if I flatter myſelf, that the raiſing our half pay to the value of it, at the time, when the allowance for officers out of employment on ſhore was firſt eſtabliſhed, will not be thought burthenſome to the nation, nor too great an addition to the public expences, at this time. If it be expedient to retain us for a day of neceſſity, it ſeems equally expedient to keep us in health and ſpirits; and if it be matter of public honor and decency, to reward our paſt ſervices, with a ſubſiſtence for life, it ſeems honorable and decent, that ſuch a ſubſiſtence ſhould not approach too nearly to want; for, plenty and want are relative terms, and a ſubſiſtence, which might be abundance to men in one ſtation, may be attended with the feelings of want in another. I ſhould not preſs this matter ſo importunately, if I were not ſupported in it, by every conſideration that occurs to my mind. His Majeſty has graciouſly declared in our favor, our eminent utility in time of war, and our innocence, in reſpect to government, in time of peace, would have recommended us to his royal regard, if he *had not* the ſenſe, which he has graciouſly expreſſed, of our conduct in this war.

The nation would bear no burthen ſo chearfully, as that ſmall one, which might ariſe from a ſuitable proviſion for us; eſpecially, if it be conſider'd, that the ambition of thoſe powers, who have now conſented to peace, is a reſtleſs paſſion,

paſſion, which may diſturb the world again, before we are ſuperannuated for ſervice.

I am perſuaded, the good will of parliament, of which we have had the honor to receive ſtrong aſſurances, concurs ſo heartily with his Majeſty's gracious intention, that we cannot be diſappointed, unleſs the wiſdom of parliament ſhould diſcern objections to this manner of rewarding us, which do not at preſent occur to me. If you ſhould hear any ſuch, or if they ſhould ariſe in your own mind, before the conſideration of this matter in the houſe, I beg you will do me the favor to communicate them, that I may explain myſelf further on this ſubject, in a future letter. But above all things, we hope the matter will be moved *this winter*. I need not tell you, who are ſo well acquainted with mankind, how wide the difference is in the idea which is entertained of the moſt eſſential ſervices, immediately after they are done, and at the diſtance of ſome time. Peace and ſecurity may, after ſome enjoyment of them, be as little felt by the nation, as health is by men unaccuſtomed to diſeaſe. In that caſe, we may be forgot at home, before our enemies have had time to recover from the wounds we have inflicted upon them. Poſterity indeed will read, and *write* the hiſtory of this glorious war; and as it will be tranſmitted to them, with hardly a blemiſh upon our conduct, I hope the conduct of the preſent age towards us, will alſo come to their hands unblemiſhed. I hope, for the ſake of the nation, that his Majeſty will not be under the neceſſity of calling us forth again. If he ſhould, I make no doubt that every one of us will return to his ſervice, with the ſame alacrity with which we firſt engaged in it. He is our MASTER, and we know our duty, and we ſhall ever be ready

to

to diſcharge it, like men of honor, whether we have the good fortune of ſucceeding in our *equitable claim* on the public, or not.

I once more beg pardon for the length of this letter, and ſubmit all I have ſaid to your better judgment and mature conſideration.

I am,

SIR,

Your moſt obliged and

Very humble Servant,

&c. &c. &c.

FINIS.

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